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Speech pathology business gets grant

BY MCKENZIE ROSE
For Hermiston Herald

Roxana Lieberg Jordheim of Hermiston received a \$4,000 grant from the National Association for the Self-Employed for her business, Li'l Talkers Speech Therapy.

Li'l Talkers, at 115 W. Hermiston Ave., Suite 100, Hermiston, offers numerous services, including language development, social skills and articulation/phonology therapy.

Jordheim grew up in Grand Forks, North Dakota, and like most college students was not quite sure which career she wanted to pursue. When she discovered a "communication sciences and amplification disorders" program in her local college's course catalog, she decided to try it out.

"From that point on, I was hooked," she said.

Jordheim spent six more years obtaining her master's degree, and upon completing it, she was ready to start working. She moved to Hermiston in August 2016 and began working for the school district. After several years, she decided to start her own speech therapy business.

"I have always had the idea of a private practice in the back of my mind, but I did not really begin to think of it as a viable option until the spring of 2021," she said.

Li'l Talkers Speech Therapy opened Nov. 1, 2021. Jordheim still was working full time for the Hermiston School District, so she only had one client at that time. Now, she sees roughly 30 clients and also has more referrals being processed.

"It has grown very quickly in just a few months," she said.

Jordheim is the lone employee at Li'l Talkers.

"I have 21 years of experience as a speech language pathologist, but I have always worked in a school system or for another agency. Calling insurance companies, billing and navigating the business world and the medical world have definitely been a challenge," she said.

Jordheim knew she would need financial assistance, though, and became a NASE member in April last year.

NASE is a large organization that aims to support self-employed individuals and small businesses. Among other pro-

"I think the best part of my job is being able to help kids communicate more effectively and helping parents support their children at home."

—Roxana Lieberg Jordheim

grams, it offers assistance with taxes, health care and more.

Jordheim first looked at the grant when she became a NASE member, but one of the requirements was to be a member for a minimum of six months. So when those six months came around, by November, she applied. However, such a grant would not just be awarded to anyone.

"It was an extensive process, with only serious businesses being considered," she explained. "A full business plan, along with documentation of startup costs, 12-month projection, and accompanying plans for growth were required as part of the application process."

According to John Hearrel, NASE's vice president of Membership and Affiliate Programs, "Li'l Talkers Speech Therapy was chosen for this Growth Grant award because it demonstrated a well-defined plan for growth ranging from executing new marketing initiatives, purchasing new equipment or other creative ways to grow and expand."

"I have had difficulty finding grants opportunities applicable to my business, so as of now, this is the sole grant I have been awarded," Jordheim said. "I was very grateful and surprised to be awarded this grant."

With the grant money, Jordheim plans to purchase "primarily sensory integration" items that augment communication, such as a voice generator. She also said she would like to hire a speech language pathology assistant within the next year.

While her self-run small business renders her busy, she thoroughly enjoys it.

"I absolutely love working with children," Jordheim said. "I think the best part of my job is being able to help kids communicate more effectively and helping parents support their children at home."



Jordheim

Good Shepherd receives funding from OHSU for colorectal cancer kits

BY ANTONIO ARREDONDO
Hermiston Herald

The Good Shepherd Health Care System in Hermiston is one of nine Oregon organizations to receive a grant from Oregon Health & Science University to address local cancer-related needs.

The OHSU Knight Cancer Institute's Community Partnership Program awarded funding to Good Shepherd to help with a new project — one that aims to increase colorectal cancer screening rates.

In years past, Good Shepherd has sent out fecal occult blood test kits, a preliminary take-home test that aims to identify those at risk for colorectal cancer for those between 50 and 75. Once returned for lab testing, these test kits help individuals. But Director of Community Health and Outreach Jessica Reker said returns have been low.

"The return rate on (the kits) was only about 10 to 15%," she said.

With the test kits free of charge, Reker and the medical staff knew that cost wasn't an issue. Instead, they needed patients to buy into the program. Part of that was shifting who provided information.

With the funding, patients now will learn about and receive FOBT kits from their pri-



Good Shepherd Health Care System/Contributed Photo, File

Good Shepherd Health Care System, Hermiston, is one of nine Oregon organizations to receive a grant from Oregon Health & Science University to address local cancer-related needs, OHSU announced July 13, 2022.

mary care physician. Before, they learned from other medical providers that many patients may not have known.

"The patient-provider relationship is a very trusting relationship," Reker said. "It just makes sense to utilize it."

While the focus of the project is ultimately to lower late-stage colorectal cancer screening rates, the way Good Shepherd hopes to achieve that goal is to increase education on the matter. Using physicians that know

the patient could ease tensions surrounding the subject, increasing education.

Along with education, Reker and Good Shepherd Community Health Educator Catherine Wisniewski know there are extra hurdles in Hermiston.

With over a quarter of the city's population having a Latino background, Good Shepherd is including bilingual test kits and interpreters.

"To ensure the approach is socially and culturally appro-

priate, GSHCS clinic partners have bilingual and bicultural staff available to assist with this initiative," Wisniewski said in a press release.

Per the terms of the OHSU grant, Good Shepherd aims to have 60 FOBT kits returned and 120 individuals educated, but it's shooting for higher numbers.

If those base numbers are realized, though, the program can continue long-term with funding from OHSU.

BRIEFS

Hermiston City Council bans psilocybin centers

The Hermiston City Council at its meeting Monday, July 25, unanimously approved a local law banning psilocybin service centers and manufacture of the hallucinogenic drug.

The same ordinance referred the prohibition to the voters at the November general election.

While Oregon's 2020 Ballot Measure 109 to legalize the psychoactive mushrooms passed statewide, 64% of voters in Umatilla County opposed it. The law allows cities and counties to vote anew to ban psilocybin manufacture and services in their jurisdictions.

Ordinance No. 2340 declared a ban on psilocybin service centers or manufacture of psilocy-

bin in Hermiston and a referral to electors of these actions.

"The voters can repeal the ordinance or let it stand," Assistant City Manager Mark Morgan said.

Hermiston's action differs from the psilocybin ordinances Umatilla County and Pendleton passed, which only referred a ban to the voters without first enacting prohibition of the fungus-derived substance.

Tune in July 29 to see Oregon governor candidates debate

The three leading candidates in the race to become Oregon's next governor will appear live at a forum Friday, July 29, hosted by the Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association.

Republican nominee Christine Drazen, Democratic nominee Tina Kotek and unaffiliated

candidate Betsy Johnson are all scheduled to debate starting at 2 p.m. in Welches.

The forum is moderated by Pamplin Media Group President Mark Garber. Questions will come from editors of newspapers across Oregon.

The debate will be livestreamed on the Hermiston Herald's website, beginning at 2 p.m. July 29.

—Hermiston Herald

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